

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 USIA-06 /019 W  
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R 281821Z JUN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 405  
INFO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MANAGUA 3010

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BTRA, NU

SUBJECT: RETURN OF THE LOUISIANA TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
TO NICARAGUA

REF: MANAGUA 1346

THE LOUISIANA TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MADE A RETURN VISIT TO NICARAGUA JUNE 15 THROUGH JUNE 17. AGAIN, AS DURING THEIR PREVIOUS VISIT LAST MARCH, THE EMBASSY WAS NEVER INFORMED OF THE VISIT NOR REQUESTED BEFOREHAND TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY WAY. IN ORDER TO AVOID THE CRITICISM THAT WE RECEIVED DURING THEIR LAST VISIT (SEE REF) WHEN WE WERE ACCUSED OF FAILING TO OFFER OUR FULL SERVICES AND COOPERATION TO THE LOUISIANA MISSION, WE ELECTED THIS TIME TO ASSIST WHERE WE FELT IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE WHETHER WE WERE OFFICIALLY ASKED TO OR NOT. THE LESS-THAN-THOROUGH PLANNING BY THE NICARAGUAN TOURIST AGENCY, THE GON AGENCY HANDLING ALL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VISIT, GAVE US NUMEROUS OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MISSION'S VISIT AND THIS TIME THE MISSION LEFT NICARAGUA QUITE THANKFUL TO THE EMBASSY. THE MISSION'S VISIT AS A WHOLE WAS SUCCESSFUL AND CREATED CONSIDERABLE GOOD WILL FOR LOUISIANA. THE DIXIELAND JAZZ BAND THAT ACCOMPANIED THE FOUR OFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION WAS A HUGE SUCCESS IN BOTH CHARITY PERFORMANCES IT GAVE IN NICARAGUA.

2. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE SOME OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THIS AND THE PREVIOUS VISIT OF THE LOUISIANA TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION. IN BOTH CASES PREPARATIONS BY THE GON WERE MADE ONLY AT THE LAST MINUTE AND IN NEITHER CASE WAS THE U.S. EMBASSY INFORMED UNTIL 48 HOURS BEFORE THEIR ARRIVAL. PRESIDENT SOMOZA TOOK A PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE FIRST VISIT, HOWEVER,

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MENT COMMISSION. IN BOTH CASES PREPARATIONS BY THE GON WERE MADE ONLY AT THE LAST MINUTE AND IN NEITHER CASE WAS THE U.S. EMBASSY INFORMED UNTIL 48 HOURS BEFORE THEIR ARRIVAL. PRESIDENT SOMOZA TOOK A PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE FIRST VISIT, HOWEVER,

AND HE MOBILIZED THE WHOLE GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING THE NATIONAL GUARD AND ALL HIS MINISTERS, TO GIVE THE VISITORS THE ROYAL TREATMENT. NATURALLY THE LOUISIANA MISSION MEMBERS WERE IMPRESSED BY THE RECEPTION THEY RECEIVED AND THE EMBASSY'S LACK OF PARTICIPATION (WE WERE NEVER ASKED NOR DID WE HAVE ANY IDEA OF THE MASSIVE LAST-MINUTE PREPARATIONS MADE BY THE GON) WAS PARTICULARLY NOTED. THIS LAST VISIT TO NICARAGUA BY THE LOUISIANA TOURIST COMMISSION WENT ENTIRELY DIFFERENT. THERE WERE FEWER OFFICIAL COMMISSION MEMBERS AND THEY BROUGHT AN EXCELLENT JAZZ BAND WITH THEM, THE DR. GREGGS' JAZZ BAND FROM SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY. THE BAND GAVE TWO BENEFIT PERFORMANCES, ONE IN MANAGUA FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NATIONAL THEATER, AND ONE IN SAN MARCOS FOR THE BENEFIT OF A HOUSING COOPERATIVE THERE. PRESIDENT SOMOZA APPEARED TO NOT EVEN BE AWARE OF THIS LAST VISIT AND ONLY THE NATIONAL TOURIST AGENCY WAS ACTIVE IN ARRANGING FOR THEIR VISIT. WITH THE DIRECTOR OF TOURISM OUT OF THE COUNTRY, A MINOR AGENCY OFFICIAL WAS APPOINTED TO HANDLE ALL ARRANGEMENTS AND DURING A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THIS OFFICIAL AND THE EMBASSY COMMERCIAL OFFICER THE DAY BEFORE THE MISSION'S ARRIVAL IT BECAME APPARENT THAT THINGS WERE NOT WELL PREPARED. THE EMBASSY ELECTED TO HELP WHERE POSSIBLE AND THE COMMERCIAL OFFICER ACCOMPANIED THE MISSION THROUGHOUT THEIR STAY IN NICARAGUA. THE EMBASSY WAS ABLE TO PROVIDE CRUCIAL HELP WITH TRANSPORTATION, TRANSLATION, ARRANGEMENT OF SOCIAL EVENTS, LOCATION OF EQUIPMENT AND INSTRUMENTS LOCALLY WHEN THESE FAILED TO ARRIVE FROM LOUISIANA, TOUR GUIDANCE DURING JUNKETS, A LUNCHEON HOSTED BY THE DCM, ETC. IN SHORT, THE EMBASSY WAS ABLE TO FILL IN THE MANY GAPS LEFT BY THE NICARAGUA TOURIST AGENCY AND AS A RESULT THE VISIT WENT MORE OR LESS SMOOTHLY. WHEN THE GROUP LEFT THE AIRPORT YESTERDAY, ALL MISSION MEMBERS INDICATED TO THE COMMERCIAL OFFICER THEIR APPRECIATION FOR THE EMBASSY'S ASSISTANCE, IN SHARP CONTRAST TO THEIR SHARP REMARKS DURING THEIR AIRPORT DEPARTURE FOLLOWING THE FIRST VISIT LAST MARCH.

3. IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THE GON'S LACK OF INTEREST IN THE LOUISIANA MISSION, ESPECIALLY SINCE THEY BROUGHT A JAZZ BAND THAT PERFORMED FOR THE BENEFIT OF NICARAGUAN CHARITIES.  
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PUBLICITY FOR THE GROUP AS A WHOLE WAS POOR, PREPARATIONS WERE INCOMPLETE AND THE MISSION ITSELF WAS QUITE SURPRISED BY THE GON'S COOL RECEPTION. THIS TIME, BY HELPING WHERE POSSIBLE, THE EMBASSY CAME OUT LOOKING VERY GOOD. OUR ONLY REGRET IS THAT WE WERE NOT REQUESTED TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE ARRANGEMENTS AND THE PUBLICITY. THEN, PERHAPS, THIS SECOND VISIT WOULD HAVE CREATED EVEN MORE GOOD WILL FOR LOUISIANA AND THE UNITED STATES.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 15 SEP 1999  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 28 JUN 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ElyME  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976MANAGU03010  
**Document Source:** ADS  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Film Number:** D760265-0183, D760250-0766  
**From:** MANAGUA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t197606112/baaesqq.tel  
**Line Count:** 107  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION ARA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ElyME  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 15 JUL 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <15 JUL 2004 by coburnhl>; APPROVED <27 OCT 2004 by ElyME>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** RETURN OF THE LOUISIANA TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
**TAGS:** BTRA, NU  
**To:** STATE INFO SAN JOSE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006